

NITI Aayog's Rural Development Division convenes a National Seminar on 'Strengthening Rural Microenterprises'

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NITI Aayog's Rural Development Division convened a National Seminar on 'Strengthening Rural Microenterprises' on 4th June 2025 at NITI Aayog, New Delhi. The day-long event brought together policymakers, industry leaders, financial institutions, international organisations, technology providers, and grassroots entrepreneurs to deliberate on strategies for empowering rural microenterprises, with a special focus on women-led initiatives.

The seminar underscored the vital role of rural microenterprises in driving inclusive economic growth and bridging regional disparities. Emphasis was laid on enabling policy frameworks, improving access to affordable credit, and scaling digital and market access tapping the initiatives like Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) amongst others. Discussions highlighted the importance of simplifying regulatory norms and ensuring last-mile connectivity to digital tools and platforms.

Experts advocated for leveraging blended finance models, institutional linkages, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds to support rural entrepreneurship. The need to unlock e-commerce platforms and private sector resources for expanding market access and impact was also highlighted.

A dedicated session on gender inclusion spotlighted grassroots innovations and success stories of rural women entrepreneurs, including 'Lakhpatti Didis' from different rural areas of India. The Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) was acknowledged as a key enabler for scaling women-led enterprises.

Key takeaways included the need for stronger multi-stakeholder collaboration, convergence of government schemes, capacity building of rural institutions, and fostering innovation ecosystems. Placing rural entrepreneurs, especially women, at the heart of India's development narrative was identified as a National priority.

The seminar concluded with presentations from young changemakers and leaders of green enterprises, illustrating the growing intersection of innovation, sustainability, and rural development.

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